

Anderson, IN – U.S. Congressman Mike Pence nominated two high school seniors from Wayne County to receive nominations to America's military academies. Barend "Ben" Van der Merwe of Richmond and Dustin Rice of Fountain City were among 14 students Pence nominated from the 6th Congressional District.

"I want to congratulate these students on their service to their local communities and for their academic excellence," said Pence. "Indiana is fortunate to have young men of their caliber who are willing to serve their country. I wish Ben and Dustin all the best as they put their country first and prepare to selflessly serve this great nation."

Barend "Ben" Van der Merwe of Richmond – Ben is the son of Eeuwrick and Janene Van der Merwe. He attends Richmond High School. Among multiple activities, he participates in varsity soccer, varsity swimming, chamber choir, and his church. He has also earned the Eagle Scout award through Boy Scouts of America. Ben was nominated for acceptance into the Air Force Academy.

Dustin Rice of Fountain City – Dustin is the son of Joe Rice and Nancy Ingle. He attends Northeastern Jr/Sr High School and participates in multiple activities including varsity cross country, varsity wrestling, and varsity track. He also is a member of the chess team as well as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Dustin was nominated for acceptance into the Naval Academy and the Merchant Marine Academy.

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